

Looking at IT and Business Alignment from the Stone Age of Information Technology

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ABSTRACT

This article uses seminal and contemporary literature from 1980s till 2012. It captures issues of processes, alignment and trails patches of the issues for every tri-decade. Tri-decade analysis will be organized by researching issues from beginning of a decade, moving along to mid-decade leading towards the closing of a decade. This approach will be done for three decades in a similar manner. After the collection of issues, the issues will be analyzed and put in prospective for practitioner and researchers to consider an implementation or continue research to build on the topics. Furthermore, the article will touch on why alignment still hasn't concurred with Business and IT, and a prospective solution will be presented with a framework solution, with a further research section.

Keywords: Alignment Constraints, Business Alignment, Enterprise Architecture, Framework, IT Alignment, Zachman

INTRODUCTION

Looking back three decades in the field of Information Technology, it has been observed that Information Technology has come a long way from what it started off. This writing will provide a tri-decade literature review synopsis of misalignment issues which were faced in the discipline of Information Technology and Business Alignment. After a review from the literature, the issue would be analyzed with

prospective solutions, and a framework to solve alignment issues, and a further research section will be provided.

The fundamental reason of researching alignment issues was intentional to capture trends, similarities and differences per every decade of similar high level issue of misalignment. We will look at one decade at a time and extract alignment issues which had occurred at the beginning, mid and towards the end of each decade.

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LOOKING AT ALIGNMENT OF IT AND BUSINESS FROM ITS BEGINNING

Alignment Constraints from Early 1980s

We will look at literature starting from early 1980s and continue it till 2012. Starting off from early 1980s, information systems was a newer introduction to businesses, it brought excitement and advantages but on the contrary being a new concept, it had brought challenges along. The challenges which were faced were information system planning, facilitation, management and end user computing (Dickson, G., et al., 1984). The fundamental issue was not having abundant competent professionals who knew Information Systems (IS). On a high level, there were limitations on management of IS, research and educational resources to completely comprehend IS.

The top ten issues were, IS planning, facilitation and management of end user computing, integration of data processing, office automation, and telecommunications, software development quality, measuring of is effectiveness and production, facilitation of organizational learning and usage of information technologies, alignment of IS and the enterprise, specification, recruitment and development of IS human resource, the use of effectiveness data resources, the development and implementation of decision support system and lastly, planning and management of application portfolio (Dickson, G., et al., 1984).

As it can be observed, in early 1980s, there was a need for formal education towards comprehension of IS to help with making decision about research, creating curriculums, having professional programs, and business activities.

Businesses make decisions about where to commit limited funds. Researchers make decisions about which issues to study. Academic institutions make decisions on the shape and direction of educational programs. Professional societies arrange conferences to deal with con-

temporary issues. For these reasons and more, an awareness of issues that leading professionals feel are of critical importance is very useful.

Below is a list of issues of dealing with IS and business alignment:

- Planning;
- Facilitation;
- Management of end user computing;
- Integration of data processing;
- Office automation;
- Telecommunications;
- Software development quality;
- Measuring of effectiveness and production;
- Facilitation of organizational learning;
- Usage of information technologies;
- Alignment of Information Systems to the enterprise;
- Specification;
- Recruitment;
- Development of IS human resource;
- Use of effectiveness data resources;
- Development and implementation of decision support system;
- Planning and management of application portfolio.

Alignment Constraints from Mid-1980s

From early till mid 1980s the issues still continued to occur of IT and business alignment. Enterprises were still in search of finding remedies of how to integrate IS into business processes smoothly. There were organizations making efforts to fix the issues. For example, there were disciplines of how to implement IS by using Strategic Information Systems Planning (SISP). The forecast outcome of implementing SISP was to help business process towards deciding the objectives for organizational computing and getting to know the next steps of software's needed (Lederer, A. L., & Sethi, V. 1988). This was a hope for implementation of enterprise architecture of what we use today to manage our enterprise resources. Unfortunately,

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